



MAGAZINE

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FRONT COVER: *The Queen, whose coronation takes place on 2nd June. This beautiful colour portrait was taken by the Hon. M. W. Elphinstone, and is published for the first time in this country.*

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INDUSTRY AT THE CROSSROADS

Danger Signals for Britain's Living Standards

By S. P. Chambers (Deputy Chairman)

Industry today faces a grave danger: that of not being able to save enough to increase the amount of capital which is behind the workers in the form of machines and equipment. Here Mr. S. P. Chambers explains how this predicament affects each one of us. He concludes that there must be a big cut in Government spending and taxes if our standards of living are to be maintained.

THE general standard of living in Britain is higher than that in Continental Europe and very much higher than that in Asiatic countries. On the other hand, it is lower than that of the United States or Canada. Few people realise how great the differences are or how easily our standards can fall. The purpose of this article is to explain some of the factors upon which our standards of living depend and to point out some of the very real dangers to which our standards are exposed today. The position is more serious and the danger more imminent than most people realise. At the same time we have the opportunity of improving our standards of living almost indefinitely, but improvement can only be a gradual process; a fall can be very rapid.

Before the war I lived for nearly five years in India, and nobody who has lived there, instead of merely visiting the country, can avoid being deeply impressed by the widespread poverty of all but a very few people in the larger cities. The standard of food, clothing, education and of medical attention in the villages was incredibly low. The signs of hunger were obvious. A loincloth or a dhoti had to last many years. There was no question of how many pupils to a class or how large classrooms should be; there was hardly one teacher (then paid about 30s. a month) for each village, and he was lucky if there was any school accommodation at all. One native doctor would have to serve the needs of a number of villages, and this meant in practice that medical attention was available only in serious cases and then usually after much delay.

It would be useless to argue that every person in India was entitled to a minimum amount of food, clothing, education and medical attention. The plain truth was that the productivity of the country was not high enough to provide a higher general standard than what I saw. To have more teachers, doctors or nurses would mean to provide more food for these persons who were not producing food, and again the hard fact was that this extra food, clothing, etc., did not exist. It is true that if many of the people in India were more usefully employed and

if those who were employed had a higher standard of productivity the position could be transformed, but that is one of India's hard long-term problems.

We in Britain have a very much higher standard, and sometimes we tend to assume that we are entitled, as of right, to certain standards of food, clothing, housing, education, medical attention and entertainment, regardless of what we produce. In fact, as in every other country in the world, *our standards of living are dependent upon our standards of production.*

As a country it is within our power over a period of years to increase our standards of living to those in the United States or Canada; if we allow things to slide, our standards could drop very low indeed. I do not suggest that we are yet in danger of dropping to Asiatic standards, but in our colder climate our essential needs are greater than those in a warm country such as India. India is striving hard to raise her standards, and in this task she deserves our good will and full co-operation. At the same time we must recognise that no country has an inherent right to any particular standard of living; it deserves only the standard which it produces. If in Britain we let our productivity go down when, in order to pay for imports of essential food and raw materials, it should be going up, we have only ourselves to blame if our standards of living fall.

Our standards of living today are in danger because our productivity is in danger. The danger signals are contained in the Government publication entitled "National Income and Expenditure, 1946-51," issued in August 1952.

We have to produce not only the things we want to use and consume ourselves (food, clothing, furniture, etc.) but also the things required by countries overseas from which we import food and raw materials. What we produce for export must be right not only in quantity but also in price, and we must produce what is wanted. This all sounds very elementary, but there are many people who, in the back of their minds, assume

that we can go on making the same old things in the same old way and expect people overseas to buy them even if these are not the goods which are wanted and are not offered at prices competitive with goods from the United States and Germany or Japan. If we are not producing the right goods at the right price, high-powered export drives to sell what we are producing will do very little good; indeed, they may do harm.

Production in its widest sense means not only the actual physical operations of manufacture, but everything which goes towards the final objective of maintaining the flow of the right goods into the hands of the people who want them. It includes the careful assessment of market requirements and even research into new products and new and better processes. All the time we must be alive to possibilities of cutting down costs of production by greater efficiency and to the need to change either what we are producing or the way in which we are producing it to meet changed conditions.

How can we improve production in this wide sense and so in the long run improve our standards of living? One simple answer which does not get us very far is that our production could rise substantially if everybody did their own job just a bit better. This would result in a larger production, greater efficiency, lower costs, a better choice of things for production and better marketing. But what must be done to get people to work better and produce more?

Incentives Lacking

The answer is not so simple. There is little doubt that as a country with our present equipment we could do much better than we are doing. It is also true that with better equipment (more modern factories and machinery and better transport and handling facilities) we could do better still. Let us look at these two aspects separately: (a) how to get a higher production with existing equipment and (b) how to get better equipment.

There is room for some differences of opinion on the first of these problems. Some people argue that men and women will do their best regardless of the reward which they get for their work. Others go to the other extreme and seem to argue that monetary reward is the only thing which counts. I think the truth lies somewhere in between. There are many men and women in all kinds of jobs who will give of their best whether the extra effort means extra pay or not. On the other hand, experience shows that if extra effort results in the reward of extra pay, there is a tangible incentive to do more and to do it better.

We frequently hear the remark that it is not worth while doing more work because the extra pay all goes in taxation. Again this is only a half-truth, because for nobody does taxation take twenty shillings in the pound. On balance, however, I think that in this country we have reached the stage when, because of very high taxation, both direct taxation (income tax) and indirect taxation (purchase tax and duty on cigarettes and drinks), people have become disheartened and do not always pull their full weight. This is as much a question of incentives for good management, both at intermediate and higher levels, as it is of incentives for other workers. The reward for good

management should be higher than the reward for bad management. There is little doubt in my mind that we have pushed taxation in this country beyond what is reasonable, and that more must be left in the employee's pocket out of his earnings so that the man who does better work and earns more money has appreciably more to spend or more to save. In some industries there is little doubt that productivity could be increased and costs brought down if there were better work done by both management and men with their existing equipment.

More Capital Needed

There are, however, limits to the increase in productivity which can be brought about by better work with the same equipment. What is often required is not more effort with the same machines, but better machines which mean higher productivity with the same amount of effort. Comparisons between the United States and Britain show that where industries are comparable there is more capital behind each worker in the United States and that the production per worker there is higher than it is here. Capital in this sense means, of course, factories, machines, transport, power stations and all the other equipment needed by modern industry. This is a very important matter; but the next question is, how is industry to get more capital per worker and more modern machines?

I explained in an article written in the *Magazine* three years ago that capital is made available only if people consume less than they produce; or, to put the same thing in other words, if people spend less than their total income. If the people in Britain as a whole spent on consumption less than their income from production, then, if the financial machinery works properly, the surplus production emerges as capital formation, i.e. as the production of new plant and machinery. If we all spent our total incomes on consumption, and if all companies distributed their total profits, there would be no productive resources available for building new factories or for making new plant and machinery. *Savings* are therefore a vital part of the process of building up the capital reserves of industry so that with more capital the real value of our production goes up and with it our standard of living.

Saving can be done by (a) companies, (b) individuals and (c) the Government. In this matter of savings the Government publication, "National Income and Expenditure 1946-51," reveals a very serious state of affairs. It shows that the real savings both of companies and of individuals are much too small; savings by the Government are non-existent. Indeed, if we make certain adjustments to take account of the true rate of depreciation of plant and machinery, it is fair to say that *the amount of saving by companies at the present time is insufficient to enable industry to replace its existing plant and machinery (as it wears out or becomes obsolete) without any element of extension or improvement.* The matter is so serious that it is worth while looking at the figures carefully.

Out of a gross national income of just over £13,000 million, "gross" capital formation appears at first sight to be as high as £3349 million, of which £1862 million is in the form of fixed plant, machinery and similar assets, and £1487 million is in

the form of more stocks of materials, finished goods and work in progress. When these figures are analysed further it is found that less than half of the figure for fixed capital formation relates to manufacturing industry; the balance relates to shops, offices, hotels, Government buildings, domestic housing, public works and other non-manufacturing buildings. It also appears that of the figure of £1487 million for the apparent increase in capital in stocks no less than £1100 million represents not a true increase in the *physical* quantity of stocks but merely a *value* increase due to rising prices. The net increase in stocks is thus only £387 million, of which a part relates to stocks held by Government, Government agencies, etc. leaving less than £300 million as the amount which relates to stocks held by industrial companies.

Of the figure of £1862 million for gross fixed capital formation (i.e. factories, plant, machinery, etc.) £800 million relates to manufacturing industry. But this figure represents the gross amount spent on factories, plant, machinery and other fixed assets and includes the expenditure on the replacement of assets which have become worn out or obsolete. It does not represent the true increase in the amount of capital in British industry. Indeed, the amount of expenditure year by year which would be necessary merely to maintain our existing stock of factories, plant, buildings, etc., is very nearly equal to the whole £800 million spent in the year, leaving the true increase in the amount of fixed capital in British industry no more than about £100 million.

Why America does Better

The true increases in both fixed capital and working stocks in British industry is thus rather less than £400 million. This is much too small if British industry is to keep its place in the hard competitive conditions of the modern world. The amount of new capital which is being put behind each worker in American industry is much greater than this. Calculations have been made which show that in 1951 the amount of extra capital invested per person in the United States is no less than ten times the amount of extra capital invested per person in the United Kingdom; and it has to be remembered that the amount of capital per worker in the United States is already far greater than that in this country. This is one of the greatest factors—probably the greatest—accounting for the higher productivity in the United States.

I started by pointing out the enormous differences in living standards in Asiatic countries and those in Britain and America. Shortage of capital in countries like India is very largely responsible for the very low productivity per head in that country. New capital can only be built up gradually, but one of the most important functions of government is to see that industry is not capital-starved. British industry is in great danger of being capital-starved, and if this goes on productivity in Britain will fall further behind productivity in other countries such as the United States.

The growth of capital in British industry is too small today because savings are too small. Some of these savings are done by businesses themselves, whether they are large businesses owned by companies such as I.C.I. or are small businesses

owned by individuals. In the past a large part of saving for industrial expansion was done in this way. Profits were not paid out wholly in taxation or dividends, and the profits retained were used to pay for additional plant and machinery, for modernisation, extension, or even for the building of new factories for new products. Today, because of the very high rates of taxation (including Profits Tax and Excess Profits Levy) and because of the way in which profits are calculated for tax purposes, the amount which can be saved by businesses is very small, and businesses, even large ones such as I.C.I., have little or no profit margin for expansion and modernisation.

In the case of I.C.I., taking rough figures in 1951, taxation reduced a profit of £40 million to £17 million, and of this £5 million was paid in dividends; of the balance of £12 million, £5 million was needed as an additional depreciation reserve for fixed assets (buildings, plant and machinery) and £7 million as an additional stock replacement reserve. The reason for needing the additional depreciation reserve is that the cost of buying and erecting new plant and machinery has increased since the war, so that the original depreciation which was allowed for in arriving at profits and which was based upon the cost of existing plant many years ago is inadequate to provide funds for replacement at today's costs. This £5 million thus does not represent a surplus available for the expansion of the business, but must be set aside if we are to replace our existing plant and machinery as it wears out or becomes obsolete.

Similarly the £7 million represents no more than the increase in the value of stocks of raw materials, work in progress and finished products due to the rise in prices. No part of the £7 million represents a physical expansion of these stocks, and therefore no part of the £7 million is in any way available as a surplus to be paid out in dividends or used for expansion. If any part of the £7 million were paid out in cash it would mean that we had £7 million less than we need to maintain our existing stock levels.

The dividends actually paid in 1951 represent in true purchasing power much less than was paid out before the war. If people are to be encouraged to invest their savings in I.C.I. we must offer a return on these savings which does not continue to fall in true purchasing power. There is no room for I.C.I. to save money here.

Where the Profits Go

It will be seen, therefore, that in the case of I.C.I., although the profits of 1951 appear to be a record, when the very heavy tax bill has been paid and provisions made for the maintenance of our existing assets and the payment of a moderate dividend nothing whatever is left over for improvement, development or expansion which would increase the productivity per worker.

What is true of I.C.I. is true of British industry as a whole. Indeed, most concerns are in a worse position. Many of them have had to borrow money from banks or raise more money from shareholders in order to keep their existing business going on the same scale as before. The figures given in

"National Income and Expenditure 1946-51" bring this out very clearly. *They show that undistributed profits of companies are less than what is necessary to maintain existing fixed assets and working stocks.* It is shown in this Government publication that the so-called "undistributed profits" are less than £700 million, although a larger sum than £700 million must be retained as representing that part of profits which is no more than the increased value of working stocks due to rising prices.

Thus if the profits of companies are examined carefully it will be seen that these profits have been too little rather than too much. The real trouble lies quite clearly in the taxation which takes away so much of the money which industry needs to build up its capital.

If industrial companies are unable, because of high taxation, to set aside sufficient money for the development of their businesses they must look outside for the savings which they need for this purpose. Who is there outside who can save what companies like I.C.I. need if they are to continue to be efficient and progressive and if they are to carry on the steady work of increasing productivity per worker?

Who can Save?

When we are thinking of individuals as savers, it is convenient to divide them into three main classes: (a) the largest group who have only small incomes, e.g. up to about £600 per annum, (b) the medium incomes, say £600 to £2000, and (c) the larger incomes, say over £2000.

People with small incomes cannot be expected to save a large proportion of their incomes. When they do save, they are more likely to pay their money into National Savings, Post Office Savings Banks, building societies and other investments which could be realised at short notice without substantial loss. This is quite natural and proper. These savings are used for Government expenditure of various kinds, housing and other non-industrial purposes; very little finds its way into investments such as I.C.I. shares. Industry cannot expect to get a large part of the savings it requires from persons with small incomes, although by far the greater part of the net national income belongs to this class.

The second category, people with medium incomes, have such heavy tax bills, both direct taxes (income tax mainly) and indirect taxes (Purchase Tax, tobacco and drink taxes), that although their standards of living are lower today than they were before the war, these people are unable to make any direct savings for investment in industry. The same is true of the larger incomes, where income tax and surtax reaches the point where it takes up to 19s. 6d. in the pound.

"National Income and Expenditure" shows that all classes of individuals saved only £98 million in 1951. The category "individuals" covers not only employees but also all persons in business, whether on their own account or in partnership, and it includes shopkeepers, farmers, doctors, solicitors and all other professional people. As the figure of £98 million includes the provision which these persons in business or farming have had to make to cover the increased price of the stocks which they have to carry, *it is quite clear that the true*

(continued on page 12)

'TERYLENE' TESTER

FLEETWOOD has always had a reputation for supplying first-rate fish. There is now a newer industry near Fleetwood which is based on chips. Not the sort of chips that usually go with fish, but chips of ivory-coloured plastic from which they are spinning our new 'Terylene' synthetic fibre.

The 'Terylene' plant is part of the Hillhouse factory of Plastics Division, a mile or two outside Fleetwood. Many of the people who work there are Fleetwood folk; like Connie Hankin, who looks after the Physical Testing Laboratory.

Connie took me for a quick look round the 'Terylene' plant before showing me her testing laboratory. We started on the top floor, where I watched drums of little ivory 'Terylene' chips being emptied into a huge rotating drier.

"We get the 'Terylene' chips from the Dyestuffs Division works at Huddersfield," said Connie, giving me a handful from the top of a drum. They were like little pieces of broken porcelain. "They've got to be blended and dried before we spin them into fibre. That's what we're doing in this great rotating oven affair."

From the drier the 'Terylene' chips are tipped into a hopper. We walked down to the floor below, where the chips are fed from the hopper into the spinning units.

The tops of the eight spinning units consist of stainless steel containers a foot or so in diameter. Inside these containers the chips fall through a heated metal grid which melts the 'Terylene.' The pool of molten 'Terylene' is then pumped through sand and gauze to filter out any solid impurities, after which it is forced through tiny holes in a block of stainless steel.

We watched the spider-web filaments of 'Terylene' coming from these holes at the bottom of the plant. As they met the cold air, the almost invisible streams of molten 'Terylene' were hardening into solid filaments. They passed through a hole in the floor and were wound on to bobbins by a special machine below.

"We're spinning 70 denier* just now," said Connie. "It's very fine, and there are thirty-six strands coming from the spinneret at the same time."

We made our way to the ground floor, where the bobbins of 'Terylene' were being wound. "You must make quite a few miles of 'Terylene' yarn a day in here," I suggested, watching the bobbins spin busily around.

Connie began to do some mental arithmetic. "We've got eight spinning units," she said, her eyes turned to the ceiling. "Each one has two spinnerets and each spinneret has thirty-six holes. Each hole is spinning at 3000 feet a minute . . . Oh

*The denier of a fibre is the weight in grams of 9000 metres. So the lower the denier the finer the fibre.

dear!" She gave up, and I handed her a pencil and paper. Frowning fiercely, she worked it out. "It's something like 360 miles of filament a minute when all the spinnerets are working together."

We left the spinning plant and walked through a large room which was alive with clattering machinery. Here the bobbins of 'Terylene' were spinning round scores at a time. The yarn was being unwound from one lot of bobbins, over a series of wheels and guides, and then wound on to another lot of bobbins.

"This seems a bit pointless," I said. "Just winding from one bobbin on to another."

"It's one of the most important stages of all," said Connie, with infinite patience. "If you look carefully you'll see that the second wheel the yarn passes round is going faster than the first. So that in going from one bobbin to another the yarn is stretched, or 'drawn' as we call it. That little hotplate that it slides over warms the yarn as it's stretched. This drawing process makes the 'Terylene' strong and lustrous."

We left the noise of the winding machines and made our way to Connie's home ground—the Testing Laboratory. It was a large, airy room. Round the walls were benches carrying a variety of different machines and gadgets.

We watched a girl testing the strength of a sample of 'Terylene' yarn. She clamped it between two lots of jaws in her machine. The jaws began to move inexorably apart. As they moved, a metal arm crept over a scale. Suddenly the yarn snapped and the arm stopped moving, marking on the scale the load that the yarn had carried before snapping.

"We've got to keep a check on broken filaments, fluffed ends, oil stains and all that sort of thing," she went on. I watched as she sat down under a big black hood and switched on a battery of lights. They were fixed so that they shone an intense light on to 'Terylene' yarn that could be wound from one bobbin to another. Any slight flaws or imperfections in the yarn sample could be easily seen and checked.

On the way out Connie took me through one of the latest parts of the plant. "This is where we're starting to make staple fibre. That's to say we chop up the 'Terylene' into short lengths like wool or cotton," Connie explained, picking up a handful of fibre from a bin. It was like shiny cotton wool. "This has to be spun by twisting the small fibres together into a yarn. Of course, it gives you a much fuller, fluffier sort of material. They're already using it for making men's socks. And you can take it from me, they'll put an end to darning."

"I must tell my wife that," I said. "It'll be the best news she has heard in years."

J.G.C.



Connie Hankin ('Terylene' Tester)

CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETS AGAIN AT BLACKPOOL



BLACKPOOL on 21st November, with an east wind whistling down the side streets and the luxurious tramcars gliding almost empty along the promenade, was a little bleak, perhaps. But the town was not shorn of all its attractions; beneath the Tower the chimpanzees' tea-party continued twice daily, and a stone's throw away, in the Winter Gardens, the 34th Central Council was in progress.

This was a singularly even-toned meeting, resembling nothing so much as a well-conducted firework show, in which stately set pieces (and, let us admit it, the occasional damp squib) were set off in brisk succession. It was only at five o'clock, under the heading of "any other business," that a surprise resolution by Billingham Division threatened to set the sparks flying in earnest.

The chairman, Mr. John Rogers, began by introducing to the meeting the four directors appointed to the Board a week before—Mr. Banks, Dr. Holroyd, Mr. Prichard and Dr. Taylor—and the new Treasurer of the Company, Mr. John Cotton. He then went on to give a piece of news that he knew the meeting would regret as much as he did. Dr. C. J. T. Cronshaw, Personnel Director, was to retire at the end of the year. Dr. Cronshaw was one of his oldest friends, said Mr.

Rogers, and it was mainly as a result of his work that the Dye-stuffs Division is as large and important as it is today.

Turning to the affairs of the Company, Mr. Rogers said that he thought they called for cautious optimism. The results achieved in the face of a difficult trade situation were largely due to the kind of people employed in I.C.I.

The first resolution put before the council concerned the much-discussed question of Staff Grade quota. At the council held earlier in the year two separate resolutions on the matter had been put forward, one of which had been referred back to Division councils for further discussion. This requested the Board "to increase the Staff Grade quota to 75% of those eligible, with special consideration for workers with 30 years' service or more," and was now proposed again by Mr. Tom McCall (Nobel), chairman of the workers' representatives. Mr. McCall expressed disappointment that the Board had not yet seen fit to give an answer. Putting it more bluntly, Mr. C. Hammond (Billingham) asked "Are you going to increase the quota? If not, why not?" Put to the vote, the motion was carried by a substantial majority.

Before discussing the second resolution on the subject, from Wilton Site Council, requesting the Board to review the Staff



Miss E. Boyd (Nobel) addresses the meeting



Mr. J. Layden (Billingham) at the microphone



Dr. A. E. Mitchell (chairman of Leathercloth Division) receives the Safety Cup

Grade Scheme, the meeting heard Mr. E. T. Grint (Chief Labour Officer). The importance of the Staff Grade Scheme was fully appreciated by the Board, he said, and he apologised for his delay in making recommendations to them about it; but it was a complicated question, and when making their recommendations the Central Labour Department wanted to do the right and fair thing by everyone. "But quite frankly," Mr. Grint continued, "with the best of intentions and the desire to do that, we have not yet got our ideas finally straight." On behalf of his own department he could now say that those recommendations would be put in front of the Board before the next Central Council.

Mr. J. Hastings (Metals) then moved a resolution: "We regret the delay in the report"; Mr. E. Hutton (Billingham) proposed to amend this by asking for specific reasons for the delay. Two or three speakers supported the amendment, but Mr. M. Thomas (Metals) and Mr. J. C. Morris (Salt), a management representative, both felt that the reasons given for the delay were very good ones.

The Chairman Intervenes

Here the chairman intervened to say that he too regretted the delay, but he deprecated the idea that the Board had any intention of evading the question or shirking their responsibility. The result of any report on the Staff Grade Scheme made to the Board by the Central Labour Department would almost certainly be an improvement in the scheme. "We must have this decided for the next meeting," Mr. Rogers said. "There is no question of that."

The amendment was then withdrawn, and the motion that the Council regretted the Company's delay in replying to the Wilton resolution was carried.

A further rise in canteen prices was foreshadowed in a statement by Mr. Grint. At the beginning of 1951 the deficit on the direct trading account was running at rather more than £200,000 a year. The Board had agreed to subsidise this account to the tune of £90,000, and to reduce the deficit to somewhere nearer this figure the price of meals had had to be increased. Since then government food subsidies had been removed, with the result that the deficit was as large as ever. "We are now, as far as we can see, back where we started, and we have to face once again this rather substantial deficit," Mr. Grint said. The policy of the Board had not changed, and therefore some adjustment in the prices of meals had to be considered, but it would first be put before Works and Division Councils for discussion. This meant that any increases could not be put into effect until after the next Division Councils. "That is one of the prices we pay (and I hope cheerfully) for joint consultation," he added.

More welcome news was the announcement that in response to a Central Council resolution sponsored by Plastics Division, the Company had decided to grant a subsidy of 10% on safety boots.

Next Mr. J. A. L. Young reported on the Workers' Pension Fund. He told the meeting that the fund had now reached a figure of over £11,800,000, had a membership of nearly 53,400, and paid pensions amounting to £290,000 a year to 5381 pen-

sioners. Although the fund's investments were now worth £1,900,000 less than their original cost, the rate of interest they earned (at the end of March 1952) was £3 18s. for every £100 invested, as against £3 12s. 11d. at the end of the previous financial year. Mr. Young explained that £1,020,000 of the "loss" he mentioned was attributable to that part of the fund's capital invested in securities which would be repaid at a fixed date in the future. It was only on their present market value that these securities showed a loss. When they were redeemed at the proper time they would actually fetch more than had been paid for them.

The new rules of the fund were having to be entirely rewritten, but they would be submitted to the trustees very soon.

A report on the safety campaign was presented by Mr. H. R. Payne, who said that the accident rate was now approaching the magic figure of one lost-time accident for every 100,000 man-hours worked. Mr. Payne mentioned that sixteen I.C.I. factories had at various times worked more than a million man-hours without a single lost-time accident, and the Fleetwood Works of Alkali Division had achieved this no fewer than five times.

The I.C.I. Safety Cup was then presented by the chairman to Dr. A. E. Mitchell of Leathercloth Division; this Division had made the remarkable improvement of 34% over their previous best accident rate.

Dr. Amor's Talk

After lunch there was a most interesting talk by Dr. A. J. Amor, the Company's principal medical officer, who succeeded in "putting across" his difficult subject, Environment and Health, with masterly clarity. He explained the improvements in environment which had contributed to doubling the expectation of life in the last 120 years, and mentioned the work being done on the prevention of disease in industry at the I.C.I. Butterwick Research Laboratory.

The meeting buckled down to business again to discuss a proposed change in the Works Council Scheme constitution. The change, proposed by Mr. F. Hartshorn (Metals), would enable anyone with twelve months' service to vote at a Works Council election, even if their service were not continuous; but to qualify, the last break in their service must not have lasted more than three years.

Mr. J. F. Ellis (Billingham) opposed the idea, saying that it would allow a vote to people who had accumulated 12 months' service but regarded the Company merely as a convenient source of seasonal work. The motion was eventually carried, but the number of votes cast against it meant that it must be referred back to Division Councils.

This was also the fate of a resolution from Nobel Division proposing that employees called for annual naval, air or military training (up to fifteen days) should receive full pay for the total period of training, as they did before the war. (The present practice seeks to ensure merely that a man does not lose financially by being absent on annual training.)

Two items were then dealt with in almost as many minutes. Mr. F. Grocott (Alkali) pleaded eloquently for any man entitled to a 30 years' service award to be given, if he requested



AN INTERVAL FOR COFFEE. Mr. T. McCall (left), chairman of the workers' representatives, chats with some of his colleagues.



THE MEETING IN HAPPY MOOD. Left to right: Dr. A. Fleck (Deputy Chairman), Mr. A. T. S. Zealley (Group Director) and Mr. R. C. Todhunter (Overseas Director).

it, a lady's gold watch instead of a man's; and Mr. Hubball (Alkali), drawing a vivid picture of a man with 40 years' service trying to accommodate his presentation clock on the average mantelpiece, asked for a small range of clocks of modern design to be made available as well as the present clock and salver. The chairman replied that some means would be found of meeting both these suggestions.

Mr. J. T. Tierney (Plastics) is always a forceful speaker; when he came to the microphone this time he was even more forceful than usual, and he had the air of a man who expects a hot, or at least a mixed reception. The resolution he asked the council to consider was that a special I.C.I. tie be made available for purchase by employees of the Company. Plastics did not invent the idea themselves, he was quick to add—they took it from a letter in the *Magazine*.

This fetched Mr. Hastings to his feet. Mr. Hastings is also a forceful speaker, and he brought his heaviest guns to bear on the I.C.I. tie. Why not have I.C.I. trousers as well? he asked.

It seemed as if everybody was determined to make fun of the Plastics resolution, except perhaps Mr. Hammond (Billingham), who set out solemnly to rally the council against the idea. "Where are the boys of the old brigade?" asked Mr. Tierney, summoning his side to the defence of the I.C.I. tie.

But in vain. The motion was lost by 43 votes for and 92 against, and so goes back to Division Councils.

The council then considered at some length ways and means of increasing membership of the Imperial Chemicals (Workers) Friendly Society. After that the secretary of the council, Mr. Alfred Inglis, made ready to close the meeting, but before doing so asked if there was any other business.

Mr. Hastings, speaking, he said, on behalf of several Divisions, had an item of "other business" to raise. It concerned the allowance for Central Council delegates; they suggested that it should be raised, in view of the increase in the cost of food and drink since the allowance was established in 1938. In seconding the resolution Mr. Hammond put forward another claim: that time spent in travelling home from Central Councils should be paid for at the overtime rate. This was considered to be a separate resolution, which must be put to the vote separately.

Mr. Hastings' resolution was carried. Billingham's, on the other hand, obviously did not win the approval of the meeting. Fortunately Mr. Hammond gauged this feeling and withdrew the motion; and thus the council, which seemed in danger for a moment of losing the good humour it had enjoyed all day, broke up happily.

M.J.D.

INDUSTRY AT THE CROSSROADS (continued from page 5)

savings of individuals as a whole is actually a minus quantity, i.e. more money has been spent by drawing on past savings than has been set aside as new savings during the year.

We are thus in the position that neither companies nor individuals are saving to enable industry to build up its capital and so help to increase our standards of living. The total expenditure of government today is running at a level which exceeds what it is receiving in taxation, and there is thus no saving by the Government.

There is one exception to the general rule that no savings are taking place. Some saving is in fact taking place through the medium of insurance companies and pension funds. Savings which are made in this way are the subject of special taxation reliefs, and it is no accident that many individuals who would find it quite impossible to save *out of their net income after taxation* are able to make pension fund contributions or pay life assurance premiums for which they get tax allowances. Taxation has thus killed individual saving but has allowed saving through life assurance and pension funds to continue. The amount saved in this way is considerable—it is over £200 million a year—but this is a mere fraction of what is needed by industry. Moreover it is undesirable that industry should have to get what little savings there are entirely from this source. Insurance companies and pension funds tend to play for safety (as they should), and it means that large, well-established companies find it easier to get capital from these sources than do the smaller and newer businesses.

What must be done to encourage individuals to save and to make it possible for companies to save? There is one clear answer—reduce taxation. But it would be no good if savings

achieved in this way were offset by a large Budget deficit. A Budget deficit leads directly to inflation, to higher prices and higher costs and makes matters worse. Reduction in taxation is possible only if there is reduction in Government expenditure. Taking central and local government together, the Government expenditure amounts to about 40% of the national income, and this is far too high if people are to be allowed to keep, either to spend themselves or to save, a reasonable proportion of their earnings.

Most politicians, whatever their party or section of a party, would probably agree with what has been said up to this point. When it comes to saying *how much* Government expenditure should be cut, and what items should be cut out or cut down, there is room for much difference of opinion. But differences about what cuts should be made must not allow us to escape from the hard and indisputable fact that there must be cuts—and fairly big cuts—if there is to be any real encouragement to save and if companies are going to have a chance of building up their reserves.

Once we are on the road to getting our savings restarted, our costs down and our productivity up, it will be found that most of our troubles with the deficit on our overseas balance of payments will disappear. On the other hand, no ingenious scheme designed to improve our balance of payments position will succeed unless we get our internal position right. The year 1952 has shown that the world is no longer hungry for British goods, and we must hurry up if we are to beat our competitors. The reward if we succeed is a higher living standard; the penalty of failure is a lower standard—perhaps much lower.



A fine collection of budgerigars

Canaries and Budgerigars

By Cyril Rogers

The hobby of breeding budgerigars or canaries has enthusiasts in every walk of life: King George V was a budgerigar breeder, and so is many a working man. And added to this pleasure there is the lottery of chance, for a budgerigar of a colour never bred before can be worth as much as £1000.

THERE are in Britain today over 100,000 budgerigar owners, and it seems that every year their number is increasing. Such is the appeal of this fascinating—and for the breeder lucrative—hobby, which embraces from the highest to the lowest in the land.

King George V was a keen budgerigar enthusiast. He kept a very fine collection of budgerigars in outdoor aviaries on the Sandringham estate and took a personal interest in his birds. Queen Elizabeth shares her grandfather's interest and before

she married had her own aviary of breeding budgerigars.

The last world war caused the budgerigar population to decrease to an alarming extent, but nevertheless practically all the colour strains were preserved. At the present time there are more breeders of budgerigars than ever before, and without a doubt budgerigars are the most popular caged bird in the world.

Thousands of budgerigars are kept singly as pets, and most wonderful ones they are too; for not only does the budgerigar

become exceedingly tame and playful but it can also imitate the human voice very clearly. The male bird is invariably a better and clearer talker than the female. Apart from this sex distinction there is no particular variety or colour of budgerigar which excels as a talking bird.

Breeding budgerigars for colour is a most exciting pastime, as it is possible these days to produce wonderfully brilliant combinations of colours. For instance, the Opalines, a sex-linked variety to be had in all colours, combine with the Clearwings to give an indescribably vivid range of blues, greens, violets and mauves. These bright colours can be made into beautiful soft pastel tones by the introduction of a further sex-linked variety—the Cinnamon.

Another lovely range can be had by crossing the dominant Yellow-faced Blues with the ordinary blue colours. This gives birds with bright yellow faces and bodies of varying shades of blue and turquoise. Then there are pure yellow and pure white birds with red eyes; in fact the combinations of colours are far too numerous to quote in this short article. Actually some of the rarer combinations have yet to be bred. At the moment they exist only on paper.

The price of budgerigars varies with the quality and colour of the individual birds. Good show specimens are often sold for over £100 each, whereas the price of ordinarily coloured healthy birds is usually £3 to £4 per pair. Colour mutations occur periodically, and the breeder has no control over these. They can just happen with any pair of birds in any breeding establishment, large or small. The dearest wish of colour breeders at the present time is to get red, pink, brown or black budgerigars, and when such mutations do appear the value of the birds would be anything up to £1000 each.

It is now just over a hundred years since the first pairs of wild Australian light green budgerigars were brought to Europe by the famous naturalist Gould in 1840. Their cultivation quickly spread to many European countries, and for about thirty years the captive budgerigars continued to reproduce their natural light green colour, when suddenly the first mutation (sport) occurred and light yellow birds appeared. This yellow mutation was fixed, and a number of strains of yellow budgerigars were founded both on the Continent and in Great Britain.

The Sky Blues

Another ten years or so slipped by before the next colour mutation occurred. This time it was a startling one—that of the sky blues. However, many years were to elapse before the first sky blues were seen in Great Britain, as their Belgian breeder preserved the strain for himself with great care.

After the first world war new colours and varieties started to appear in rapid succession: first came the dark greens, then olive-greens, cobalt blues, mauves, whites and greywings. As the list of colours increased so the number of breeders steadily grew, and in 1925 the first specialist club for the encouragement of budgerigar breeding and exhibiting was founded.

With a specialist club as its guide, budgerigar breeding took on a new status and began to attract to its ranks men with scientific knowledge. The first scientific investigation of the

budgerigar's colour inheritance was carried out by Dr. Hans Duncker and Consul Carl Cremer, both of Bremen, Germany. These gentlemen wrote numerous articles supported by actual breeding results, showing that the budgerigar's colour factors were definitely controlled by Mendel's law of inheritance. This revelation caused quite a sensation, and at first many old die-hard breeders would not accept the findings of Mendel.

Now for a few words about how these birds should be kept. Cages should be hung so that the birds will get the maximum amount of light and air but at the same time remain free from draught and dampness. Budgerigars are very tough little birds, and they can stand quite low temperatures without discomfort provided they are not subjected to damp and draughts.

The food needed by a budgerigar is very simple. A good standard all-the-year-round mixture is two parts canary seed, one part white millet seed and a handful of groats or clipped oats. In addition they require a regular supply of grit, cuttle-fish bone, fresh water and green food. Such green foods as chickweed, groundsel, seeding grasses, spinach, heart of cabbage, carrot and apple are readily eaten by birds of all ages. For a special titbit there is nothing better than Indian millet sprays, which are also very useful if a bird is a little off colour.

Budgerigars are very happy creatures and need little encouragement to set about raising families. There are roughly three types of breeding place—cages, small pens and aviaries. Where only a limited amount of space is available, cage breeding is the most satisfactory method and one that is practised to a considerable extent up and down the country. Cages should not be less than 3 ft. long, 15 in. high and 12 in. deep, in order to give the minimum amount of flight room necessary to keep the birds healthy. The young stock and non-breeding birds have to be kept separate from the breeders so that the latter can have as much room for exercise as possible.

Pen breeding is an excellent method, as it gives the birds quite good flying space and at the same time they are kept under strict control. The size of the pens is governed by the amount of space at the breeder's disposal. However, to be effective pens should not be less than 3 ft. wide, 3 ft. deep and 6 ft. high.

Budgerigars breed equally well in all the different types of accommodation. They do not build nests in which to lay their clutches of eggs but deposit them directly on the bare wood of the nesting boxes. These nesting boxes all follow certain basic principles: an entrance hole, a door at top or side for inspection, and a removable concave wooden bottom. Usually they are about 8 in. long, 5 in. wide and 8 in. high. They can be made of any kind of wood (preferably wood that is not too soft) and should be creosoted on the outside every year: this reduces the risk of mite pests. The loose concave nest-bottom makes for quick and easy cleaning.

Seventeen Days' Incubation

The incubation period is about seventeen days, and the hens start sitting from the first egg. As eggs are laid on alternate days the size of the chicks in the nest always varies. The



THE YORKSHIRE CANARY

strain on the adult birds is considerably lessened by the spread of the young birds, as for the first few days the young are fed on digested food. The young birds leave their nest boxes fully feathered and can feed quite on their own after they have been out for about a week. When all the chicks have flown, they should be removed so that the parents can proceed with the next nest of young.

Prospective talking birds should be taken into training as young as possible; in fact adult moulted birds can rarely be trained to talk. A week or so after the young birds have been taken away from their parents is the best time to take them in hand. Once the bird's confidence has been gained by steady and gentle handling they will soon learn to repeat the word or words spoken each time the cage is approached. No doubt

many readers have heard the amazing vocabulary of the talking budgerigars that have been broadcast over the radio from time to time. With perseverance there is no reason why any bird taken into training by a family should not equal the radio stars.

I should like to add a few words of advice to prospective budgerigar breeders: too much money should not be expended on buying the initial stock. A few pairs of ordinary birds should be tried first until experience has been gained. There is a very good weekly paper, *Cage Birds*, which gives up-to-date news of the bird world. There are also many books devoted entirely to the various aspects of budgerigar keeping, breeding and exhibiting.

Canaries differ from budgerigars in that they were first bred in captivity well over 400 years ago. In consequence they are fully domesticated in every respect. Most varieties were created a very long time ago. All are descended from the little wild yellowish-green canaries, but unfortunately some of the varieties have almost died out. However, since the end of the last war there has been a revived interest in some of the rarer kinds, and it is to be hoped that in most cases a complete revival will result. One new breed—the Gloster Fancies—and two new colours—the Dilutes and the red-factor birds—have been created this century.

At the present time there are three breeds which stand out in popularity well above all the others. First and foremost come the active little Border Fancies, followed closely by the slim elegant Yorkshires and the big bold Norwich. These types can be had in yellow (buff), white, green cinnamon, blue and fawn.

Many Varieties

Among the other varieties there are the Gloster Fancies—smart little birds about the size of Borders with a neat round crest on the top of their heads; the Lizard Fancies with their thumbnail-shaped clear cap and dark bodies beautifully marked with lines of black ticks; the crested Norwich and the crested Lancashires, the latter being the largest of all the many breeds. Then there are the Frills. These birds are similar in size and shape to the Yorkshires, but instead of their feathers lying smooth and snug to the body they are all frilly, giving a powder-puff effect. Although not many are seen these days in Great Britain they are still quite popular on the Continent and in the U.S.A.

Finally there are the birds of strange shape—the Belgian Fancies and the Scots Fancies. The former are, as their name indicates, of Continental origin and were undoubtedly the ancestors of the Scots Fancies. Both of these breeds are of unusual shape, having their shoulders higher than their heads. They always create great interest whenever exhibited.

Some of the varieties are colour fed with a special food when they are moulting, and this gives them an attractive rich orange colour. As distinct from the colour-fed birds there are the colour-bred birds, whose colours verge on the nearly red. These red-factor birds, as they are called, were derived from crossing the South American Red Hooded Siskins with ordinary canaries and then back crossing the resulting copper-coloured hybrids again with normal canaries. To get the

desired result much selection has to be carried out with these red-factor birds, and many shades of colour such as apricot, dark orange, salmon pink and near-red result. This class of bird is popular all over the world, and much experimental work has been carried out in Great Britain, Germany and the U.S.A.

There is also a variety of canaries called Rollers, which are bred entirely for their song.

As a general rule all the different breeds of canaries are bred in cages approximately 30 in. long, 12 in. high and 12 in. deep, the actual size varying with the breed and the amount of accommodation available to the breeder. Canaries will of course breed very well in garden aviaries, and this is quite a good method when true-bred exhibition birds are not essential.

Breeding birds should be paired up in March and provided with a lined nest pan and materials such as moss and cow-hair with which to build their nests. The eggs (usually four or five) are laid every day, and it is usual to remove them as laid until the clutch is finished. They are then replaced. This is done so that all the young hatch at approximately the same time and the younger ones are not crushed to death by their elder brothers and sisters. This is quite a different procedure to that of the budgerigars, where it is more or less essential that the young should be spaced in age.

The young hatch in about thirteen to fourteen days and leave the nest when just over three weeks old and three-parts fledged. During this period the parents need to be fed with good soft food (plenty of fresh green food in addition to their usual seed mixture), water and grit. The soft foods can be bought at any good birdseed store, and there are many excellent balanced foods on the market. As soon as the young can feed on their own they should be removed from their parents (who need to be freed for their second clutch) and should be housed on their own with plenty of space in which to exercise and develop.

A Good Seed Mixture

A good standard seed mixture, for use during breeding and summer months, can be made up as follows: One part large canary, two parts small canary, two parts red rape and quarter part hemp. During the cold weather the quantity of hemp can be increased, and linseed, nigar seed and pinhead groats can be added because of their warming values.

Most varieties of canaries, both old and young, should be allowed to bath several times a week, particularly during the summer months, and fresh clean water should be available at all times.

The treatment, feeding and management of individual pet canaries are just the same as with the breeding stock. In addition to being wonderful songsters cock canaries can become exceedingly tame and confiding and do make really delightful pets, given tact and patience on the part of the owner.

Many breeders get quite a thrill out of exhibiting the birds they have bred, and there are shows of canaries and other birds in all the big towns. As with the budgerigars, there are many specialist canary societies which breeders would be well advised to join.

Furnishing Your Home

Some useful suggestions from an Alkali Division enterprise

By the Editor

What to buy? Where to buy? How much to spend? These are problems that confront every couple setting up home—rich or poor. Alkali Division have done some research on this subject as a guide to wise spending

IN a row of new council houses near Northwich in Cheshire, just a few minutes' drive from the main works of Alkali Division, there is one house that stands out a little from the others because its garden is weedless and its lawn without a plantain. This is the Alkali Division demonstration council house—a demonstration of how to get value for money in furnishing a home.

The house was opened to view in May last year. It had been furnished as economically as possible with the minimum amount of furniture deemed necessary for a man and wife and two children. Immediately the house attracted interest. Visitors poured in, and in the first month over 400 people were conducted over it.

Heartened by the interest shown in this experiment, Mr. R. E. Tugman, the father of the scheme, who happens to be the Division Safety Officer, produced a booklet called "Furnishing your Home—A Guide to Wise Spending." The booklet, published last month, is attractively illustrated with drawings and photographs and costs one shilling.

One cannot do better than quote from it the opening words to summarise the principles of the demonstration house:

Recently many people who have never had a home of their own before have been given the tenancy of houses and have, naturally, had difficulty in furnishing them. We all know that to get all the furniture which we would like for a

new house involves a very considerable sum of money—more than many of us could possibly afford—and there have been cases in the past where people, chiefly from inexperience, have involved themselves in hire-purchase commitments far beyond their means. The result has been, instead of settling happily in a new home, they have almost immediately been confronted with financial worry. An attempt has therefore been made to find out first the minimum furniture required in a council house for a man and wife and two children, and then to obtain that minimum at the lowest possible cost. An ordinary council house has been furnished on these lines and every effort was made to make it comfortable and pleasant to live in.

The bill for furnishing (everything included) came to £177 6s. Of this amount, £67 9s. 7d. worth of furniture could be bought on hire purchase by paying £8 8s. 8d. down and a weekly payment of 14s.

The atmosphere of the house is fresh and friendly, and you have a feeling that it only needs to be lived in to be a really inviting home. The furniture is of the simple cottage type and to my mind all the better for being unpretentious. Quite a lot of it is home-made, in which case time and materials have been charged up in reckoning cost. Some idea of the style can be gathered from the photographs and sketches on the following pages.



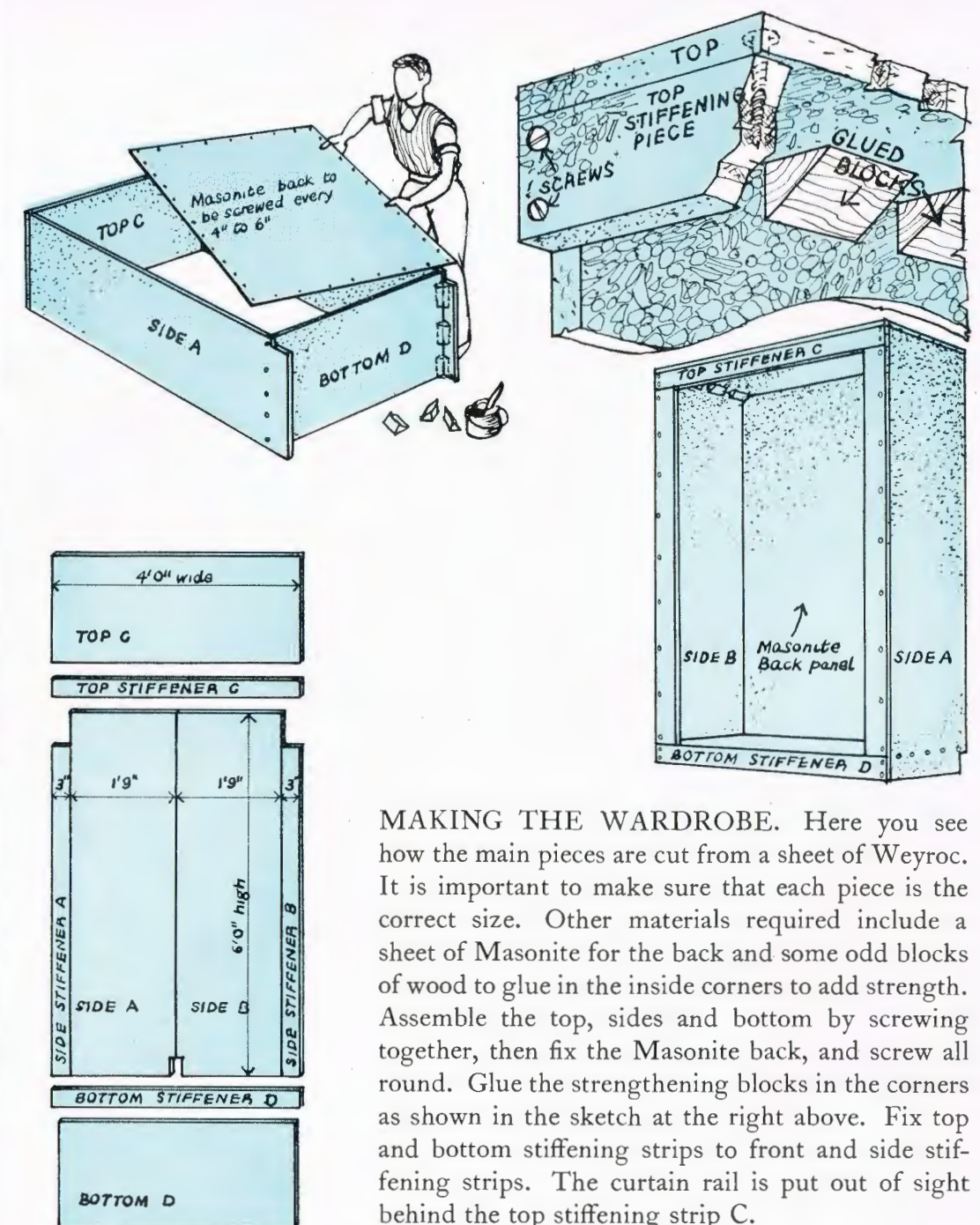
THE LIVING ROOM. The total cost of all furniture and fittings in this room was £79 18s. 5½d. Suggestions to note are:

CHAIRS wear better and brighten up the room if finished in the natural colour of the wood.

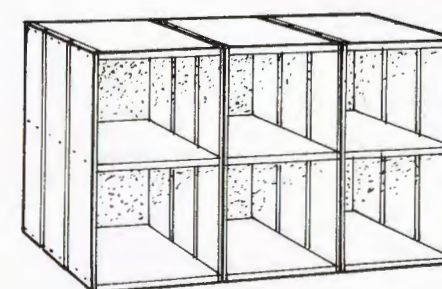
A THREE-PIECE suite is an expensive way of buying easy chairs. If money is short, buy fireside chairs: it is the shape that provides the comfort—not the amount of padding.

A NARROW (2 ft. 6 in.) divan gives many things—extra seating for three people, a place for youngsters to rest, and a spare bed for friends. Cover with bright material or a rug.

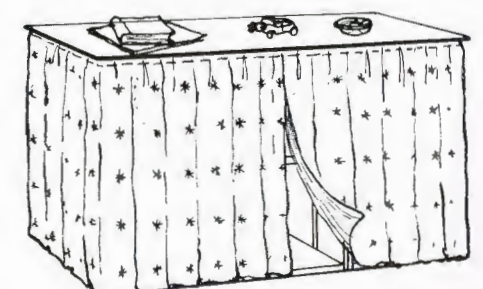
BUY a plain sideboard of the natural wood colour that will wear well and not show marks. See that it goes right down to the floor or stands on legs high enough to clean beneath. It need not be bought in a suite with the table and chairs but should go with them.



MAKING THE WARDROBE. Here you see how the main pieces are cut from a sheet of Weyroc. It is important to make sure that each piece is the correct size. Other materials required include a sheet of Masonite for the back and some odd blocks of wood to glue in the inside corners to add strength. Assemble the top, sides and bottom by screwing together, then fix the Masonite back, and screw all round. Glue the strengthening blocks in the corners as shown in the sketch at the right above. Fix top and bottom stiffening strips to front and side stiffening strips. The curtain rail is put out of sight behind the top stiffening strip C.



OLD PACKING CASES or orange boxes fixed side by side will make useful shelves or a bookcase. Although the wood is usually rough, it can be smoothed down with sandpaper and painted—or covered with a piece of material round the sides and with a curtain (detachable for washing) in front. A good top can be made from Masonite or plywood screwed down.





THE BEDROOM, in the corner of which stands the home-made wardrobe referred to on the previous page. Furniture and fittings cost £35 18s. 9d. Suggestions to note are:

IT is generally unwise to buy a bedroom suite—instead choose your pieces separately according to your needs. This will work out cheaper.

THE bright colours in your rooms should be in the curtains and cushions. The best value in curtain material is what is normally called dress material. Avoid a shiny surface, because this wears badly and soon looks drab. Buy cottons rather than rayons.

WITH bed linen money can be saved by buying remnants of unbleached cloth for the cot and single beds. The extra work of trimming and hemming will be well repaid by the way the material wears if you choose with an eye to toughness. The colour of unbleached cloth soon improves with washing.

I.C.I. NEWS

FOUR NEW DIRECTORS APPOINTED TO BOARD

ON 13th November four new directors were appointed to the I.C.I. Board. They were Mr. R. A. Banks (Managing Director, Alkali Division), Dr. R. Holroyd (Joint Managing Director, Billingham Division), Mr. C. R. Prichard (Chairman, Salt Division), and Dr. J. Taylor (Joint Managing Director, Nobel Division).

Mr. R. A. Banks was educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge. He has spent all his twenty-eight years in industry with the Alkali Division of I.C.I. and its forerunners, starting



Mr. R. A. Banks

at Winnington in the early part of 1924 as a chemist in the Research Department and moving later to the Lostock management. In 1929 he was sent on a tour of all I.C.I. interests in England preparatory to serving as technical representative in India from the end of 1929 to the end of 1933. On his return he joined the newly formed Techno-Commercial Department at Winnington under Mr. Steel. He was appointed a delegate director of I.C.I. (Alkali) Ltd. in 1938 and during the war he was responsible for the Alkali Division government contracts. At the beginning of 1944 he was promoted to managing director, the position he held until his new appointment.

Mr. Banks has done a great deal to foster the growth of the alkali industry in India. Last year he spent several weeks at Khewra and for some years he has been a director of A.C.C.I. and more recently of the Khewra Soda Company. Also since the war he has visited the Magadi Soda Company in Kenya. He has recently returned from a visit to the United States on polythene business.

In his younger days Mr. Banks was a good tennis and squash player. He is a motor-car enthusiast and owns a vintage Lagonda. The Boy Scout movement is one of his prime outside interests, and he has been the District Commissioner for mid-Cheshire for about six years. As a bachelor his home for a number of years was a houseboat moored near Saltersford Locks, not far from Winnington; he was forced to leave *Effie*, however, when she sank during floods. He now lives on land with his wife, two sons and a daughter.

Dr. R. Holroyd read chemistry at Sheffield University from 1921 to 1925, and before joining I.C.I. at Winnington in 1928 spent three years on coal-oil research. This is a subject on which he is a recognised authority, and since going to Billingham in 1930 he has been closely associated with the development of the Oil Works.



Dr. R. Holroyd

He is a corporate member of the Institute of Fuel and has served three years on the Fuel Research Board of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. In the closing stages of the second world war Dr. Holroyd led a number of teams investigating wartime oil and aviation fuel developments in Germany.

He became Billingham Division Research Director in 1947. Since that time he has been interested predominantly in the production of chemicals from petroleum raw materials and in that connection has paid several visits to the U.S.A.

Dr. Holroyd's hobbies are golf and the local history of Billingham.

Mr. C. R. Prichard was educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Oxford, where he took a first-class honours degree in chemistry. He joined Brunner, Mond & Co. as a research chemist in 1926 and then spent some time at Lostock Works before returning to Winnington to work in the Managing Director's Department.

In 1929 he spent a year in the Head Office Technical Department under Mr. Lutyens, going back to Winnington to work in the Techno-Commercial Department in 1930. He spent considerable time on the project for an Alkali works in Australia and in this connection visited Australia for about six months in 1932.

Before the war Mr. Prichard was a member of the Auxiliary Air Force and he was called up in August 1939, reaching the rank of Wing Commander before returning to I.C.I. in 1943, when he was made a delegate director of the Alkali Division. At the end of 1945 he was promoted to joint managing director, with Mr. Banks and Mr. Batty. He was made chairman of the



Mr. C. R. Prichard

Salt Division in 1950 but remained on the Alkali Division board as a visiting director. Since the war he has paid two visits to Australia and one to South America.

In his earlier days he was a keen lawn tennis and squash rackets player, and in 1929 he was a member of the team that represented I.C.I. at hockey against I.G. Farbenindustrie.

Dr. James Taylor is a County Durham man. He graduated from Durham University and continued his scientific studies on the Continent at Paris and Utrecht. Thereafter he did research for a year in the Cavendish Laboratory, Trinity



Dr. James Taylor

College, Cambridge, under Sir J. J. Thomson and Lord Rutherford. He is a D.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.I.C., F.Inst.P. and M.I.Min.E.

Dr. Taylor joined I.C.I. in 1928 as a physicist in the Nobel Division Research Department at Ardeer. In succeeding years he did much important work on the study of explosives phenomena and filled increasingly responsible posts in the organisation. For special work during the last war he was awarded the M.B.E. On the retirement of Dr. J. Weir in 1946 Dr. Taylor became Research Manager, Nobel Division, and later in that year he was appointed to the Division board. On 1st October, 1951, he was made a joint managing director of Nobel Division.

Dr. Taylor has many interests, and he has been particularly energetic in matters affecting the training of scientific staff of all grades. He has made many contributions to the technical press, and earlier this year his book *Detonation in Condensed Explosives*, dealing with the work of Nobel research men in the last twenty years, was published.

His recreations include mountaineering and sailing. He is married and has a family of two sons and one daughter.

Board moves back to Imperial Chemical House

At the beginning of this month the I.C.I. executive directors moved from Nobel House, Buckingham Gate, back to the sixth floor of Imperial Chemical House, Millbank.

This return, after an absence of twelve years, is the culmination of a series of moves designed to bring as many of the Head Office departments as possible under one roof. On the outbreak of war many of these departments were evacuated to the provinces, and later returned to rented buildings scattered



Imperial Chemical House

Nobel House

throughout London. The movement back to Millbank started soon after Imperial Chemical House began to be released by the Ministry of Works in 1948 and has been going on ever since.

Nobel House will be occupied largely by Central Purchasing Department, which since 1946 has been in a converted factory building in Earlsfield, South London. Before that the department was housed in part of the Alkali Division Recreation Club at Northwich.

I.C.I. Donation to King George VI Fund

The Company has given £8000 to the King George VI National Memorial Fund. Of this sum £5000 has gone to the Lord Mayor of London's fund and £3000 to supporting funds in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the provinces.

ALKALI DIVISION

Chess Captain of Cheshire

Mr. W. A. Croft of the Civil Engineering Department at Winnington is now captaining the Cheshire chess team for the second consecutive year. He first played chess for Cheshire about twenty years ago, and for several years before the war he was vice-captain. He is also captain of his local club and plays for Cheshire in the County Correspondence Championship, which usually lasts for about seven months each year. For three years before joining I.C.I. he was in the Northumberland team, and one year he was the county champion of Northumberland.

Among the noteworthy events in Mr. Croft's chess career are the matches he has played against the former world champions Capablanca and Alekhine and against the former women's world champion Miss V. Menchik. On one occasion he played twelve members of Gateshead Club together. One of the most unusual matches in which he has taken part in recent years was between Cheshire and Northumberland. This was played by telephone, almost a thousand moves being transmitted and received during the seven hours for which the line had been booked.

Mr. Croft well remembers the years when the Winnington

Park Club was a power in Cheshire chess. It was headed by Mr. I. L. Clifford, a member of the Research Department at Winnington, who was at that time one of the strongest players in Cheshire. Unfortunately the club had to disband through lack of support.

Chess has been Mr. Croft's main pastime for many years. He began playing as a schoolboy, and during wintertime it is rare for a week to pass when he does not spend one or two evenings playing either county matches or club games.

BILLINGHAM DIVISION

Radio Enthusiast talks to the World

Known to fellow amateur radio enthusiasts in many countries by his call-sign G3TO, Mr. A. R. Donald, Research Works general foreman, has for the past six years been trying to complete a collection of call-sign cards which would prove that he had exchanged radio messages with amateur operators in all the forty-eight states of the U.S.A.

Spending many hours at the transmitter and receiver he built in his West Hartlepool home, Mr. Donald has "talked"



Mr. Donald at his transmitter

in speech or Morse code with about 1800 American amateurs in his effort to obtain a full set of cards—each carries the call-sign of the operator to whom he spoke, with details of when contact was made—and last week he received confirmation that his six-year radio hunt is now ended.

It came when the postman delivered cards sent by air mail by amateurs in Delaware and Iowa, the last two states on his list.

Now that the collection is complete Mr. Donald will send them to the headquarters of the American Radio Relay League, the organisation to which most amateurs in the U.S.A. belong, and he will receive a certificate stating that he has successfully made contact with "hams," as they are called, in each state.

Mr. Donald is a member of the Radio Society of Great Britain and the holder since before 1939 of an amateur operator's licence issued by the Postmaster-General.

Talking to operators in Australia, the Far East, Africa, Europe and North and South America, he has received more than 2500 confirmatory cards since he first made radio his hobby.

Some of the most impressive were those sent by Russian amateurs—many carried pictures of Russian scenes and Communist leaders—but communication with operators in countries behind the Iron Curtain ceased about two years ago.

Soccer by Floodlight

The first floodlit football match ever held in the North-east was played at the Synthonia Soccer Section's ground recently.

The Synthonia team defeated their opponents, an R.A.F. XI, in a game that was fast and entertaining despite heavy rain and the treacherous condition of the ground. The general opinion of players, officials and spectators was that the club's experiment in staging the match was well worth while.

DYESTUFFS DIVISION

Changes in Board

Several changes have been made in the composition of the Division board following Mr. Standring's appointment to the I.C.I. Board.

Mr. C. Paine has been appointed Division chairman, Dr. J. Avery a joint managing director, and Mr. H. Smith director in charge of production.

Mr. Paine, who has been joint managing director of the Division since September 1951, joined the Research Department at Levinstein Ltd. in 1917 and worked there as a research chemist for seventeen years. He specialised particularly in the dyestuffs and intermediates fields, in which he made a number of inventions, until 1934, when he was transferred to the Patents Department. In 1937 he was seconded to I.C.I. (New York), and after nearly two years in America he returned to Blackley and was appointed leader of the Exploratory Research Section. Mr. Paine became assistant research manager in 1942, research manager in 1943, and a delegate director of I.C. (Pharmaceuticals) Ltd. the following year. He was appointed research director of the Division in 1946 and a visiting member of General Chemicals Division board in February 1952. Among his many outside interests Mr. Paine is chairman of the Wilmslow Guild, Cheshire, which is the largest adult education centre in Britain.



Mr. C. Paine

Dr. Avery joined the Company as a chemist in the Research Department at Blackley in 1928 and later in the same year was transferred to Huddersfield. For the next ten years he was engaged on the manufacture of dyestuffs, intermediates and auxiliary products both at Ellesmere Port and Blackley Works, where he eventually became superintendent of the Intermediates Experimental Section. He left the works in 1938 and went to the Operating Section, but returned to Blackley again in 1941. Before he was appointed Division Production Manager in 1945 he spent three



Dr. J. Avery

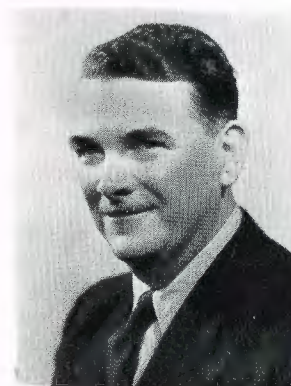


A floodlit soccer game—the first in north-east England—in progress at the Billingham Synthonia Club

years in the Production Department at Hexagon House, where as a member of the works management committees he gained a thorough knowledge of the problems of every factory in the Division.

Dr. Avery was appointed a representative to the board of Arnold Hoffman & Co. Inc. in 1951 and a visiting member of Plastics Division board in 1952. He was a delegate director of I.C. (Pharmaceuticals) Ltd. from 1947 to 1952.

Mr. Smith started in 1929 in the Research Department at Blackley, and after six years there went to the Research Department at Grangemouth. In



Mr. H. Smith

1939 he returned to Hexagon House and two years later was transferred to one of the manufacturing departments in Blackley Works. Soon after, he went to Huddersfield Works, where he became head of the Intermediates Department and in 1943 an assistant works manager. Five years later Mr. Smith again returned to Hexagon House to take charge of the Operating Section. Early in 1952 he was appointed a member of the delegate board of I.C. (Pharmaceuticals) Ltd. and

a non-resident director of Arnold Hoffman & Co. Inc.

LEATHERCLOTH DIVISION

Presentation of Safety Cup

At the Central Council held at Blackpool on 21st November the I.C.I. Safety Cup was awarded to the Division for the dramatic improvement it had made during the last six months over its previous best accident rate. This improvement was 34%.



Delegates to Central Council admiring the Safety Cup

Dr. A. E. Mitchell, chairman of the Division, who received the cup from the hands of Mr. John Rogers, said how pleased and proud he was that this quite small Division had managed to acquire the trophy. "This sort of job," said Dr. Mitchell, "is all teamwork, and I wish quite publicly to pay a tribute to our safety officer and his team, who have done so much in the

way of training, guidance and the like to achieve this very desirable object."

In presenting the report on the safety campaign to the Council, Mr. H. R. Payne mentioned that the accident rate for the whole of I.C.I. was now approaching the magic figure of one lost-time accident for every 100,000 man-hours worked. The figures for the last two quarters of the year were 1.06 and 1.05, and there was every reason to hope that next year the figure would fall below 1 at last.

METALS DIVISION

New Factory opened at Waunarlwydd

There was certainly plenty of "zip" in South Wales newspapers dated 25th and 26th November, when the opening of a new factory of Lightning Fasteners Ltd. provided a big news story. Glasnant Works, as it has been christened, stands close to the Waunarlwydd Works of the Metals Division and houses Lightning Fastener employees who until recently were working



At the opening of the new Lightning Fastener factory: Mrs. Quig with the Mayor and Mayoress of Swansea, Mr. H. E. Jackson (left) and Sir Arthur Smout (right)

under somewhat improvised conditions at Upper Bank Works (the former Ministry of Supply agency factory).

In the absence of her husband, who was unfortunately indisposed, Mrs. A. J. Quig turned the ceremonial golden key to open Glasnant Works on 25th November. A message from Mr. Quig was then read to the assembled employees and visitors. In it Mr. Quig referred to an unexpected and very pronounced upward trend in retail sales in the last two or three weeks; this, he felt, was an encouraging portent for the future of the new factory.

At a luncheon beforehand distinguished guests included Sir Arthur Smout, the Mayor and Mayoress of Swansea, Sir Brograve Beauchamp (chairman of the firm of contractors who built Glasnant Works), Mr. H. E. Jackson and several other directors of Metals Division, and representatives of the overseas factories of Lightning Fasteners Ltd.

The theme of Sir Arthur Smout's speech was the cordial relations which had existed for many years between I.C.I. and the people of Swansea. The Company had been so encouraged by the co-operative attitude of both the civic authorities and the workers in its Swansea factories that it had

decided to translate an experiment conducted in hired premises in Landore into a permanency at Waunarlwydd. "So today," Sir Arthur went on, "another new industry finds itself stabilised in your midst, and the citizens of Swansea have yet another opportunity of proving their versatility and adaptiveness. That they will do this I have no doubt." All present would wish to praise those responsible for the conception, design and construction of a factory which, while essentially functional, was at the same time a notable contribution to the aesthetic life of the community.

The new factory, which at present has about 300 employees, represents a triumph for the Metals Division engineers who planned it and the contractors who built it, for less than twelve months after preliminary excavations began pilot production was under way.

Mr. Roland Finch

It was with great regret that we heard of the death on 24th November of Mr. Roland Finch, formerly joint managing director of Metals Division.

In a letter to the editor of *Metals Monitor* in 1947 Mr. Finch described his service with the Company in these terms: "Forty-three years at Witton, twenty-five at Leeds, fifteen at Wolverhampton, ten at Steatite, ten with Lightning Fasteners and five with Fermeture Eclair gives me about 108 years' service." This apparently frivolous comment reveals much of Mr. Finch's character. By its very understatement it emphasises his lifelong loyalty to the Company, the breadth of his attainments in its service and his persistent failure to acknowledge them as in any way remarkable.

In the forty-four years between his joining Kynoch Ltd. in 1902 and his retirement Mr. Finch saw service as Metal Sales manager, chairman of Marston Excelsior Ltd. and acting chairman of Steatite and Porcelain Products Ltd. His activities on behalf of Lightning Fasteners Ltd. included the establishment of factories in France, Germany, Austria and Canada.

Apart from his I.C.I. interests Mr. Finch was very well known in the metal trade both in this country and abroad, for his official appointments included membership of the Grand Council of the Federation of British Industries, and the Council, Executive Committee and International Relations Committee of the British Non-ferrous Metals Federation. But it was, perhaps, as president of the International Conference of Non-ferrous Metal Manufacturers that Mr. Finch earned the widest circle of friends.

Mr. Finch's death at the age of 70 robs I.C.I. of a distinguished pensioner and the metal trade of a much-respected colleague. He himself, however, would be the last to advocate a gloomy or pretentious epitaph. Let us rather record our gratitude for many years of unassuming friendliness and for his unfailing enjoyment of all the many aspects of life in Metals Division.

NOBEL DIVISION

Gold Medallist

On 25th November, Mr. R. Westwater, assistant manager in Technical Service Department, was honoured by the Institute of Quarrying. After a lunch in the George Hotel, Edinburgh, he was made a Fellow of the Institute of Quarrying and received the McPherson Gold Medal and a prize. The medal was presented by Mr. W. S. Johnston, president of the

Institute, who complimented Mr. Westwater on the high quality of his winning paper, "The Blasting of Stone in Quarries."

The McPherson Gold Medal is open to members or associates of the Institute throughout the world, and this is the first time it has been won in the British Isles.

Office Girls in Glasgow Model Dresses

On 11th November there was one of the largest attendances ever for a Nobel (Glasgow) Club affair. Most of the 200 people present were ladies, although some six brave men had managed to let their interest overcome whatever trepidation they may have felt.

The reason for all this enthusiasm was a mannequin parade, in which three Nobel girls assisted a professional mannequin



Glasgow office girls who turned model for an evening. Left to right: Joan Strachan, Beth McMillan, Caroline Birnie.

to model woollen dresses, cocktail dresses, ballerina dresses and evening dresses from one of the leading Glasgow houses. Miss Caroline Birnie (Filing Room), Miss J. Strachan (Secretary's Department, Nobel House) and Miss B. McMillan (Blythswood Square teleprinter room) each modelled eight dresses. It was generally agreed that both girls and dresses were charming.

Girl wins Canoeing Certificate

Energetic, hungry days in the open, plenty of good food, early bed and sound sleep were only some of the ingredients in an adventurous mixture enjoyed by two Ardeer girls recently. They were Miss Marie Lafferty (Safety Fuse Department) and Miss Janet Howie (Laboratories), who spent a month at the "Outward Bound" School for girls at Bisham Abbey, Bucks.

Life was very different for them that month. They rose at 7 a.m., attended prayers, had breakfast, and after doing their "daily dozen" for fifteen minutes out of doors started a programme which contained something new in theory or practice every day. Miss Howie specialised in canoeing and sailing, and Miss Lafferty did a great deal of pony trekking and camping out. They were both taught elementary first aid, how to pack a rucksack, how to read a map and how to find their way by compass.

After dinner every evening there were talks on current affairs, lectures on music or drama, or first-hand accounts of adventurous lives.

Miss Howie made such a success of her canoeing that during her stay she qualified for the Elementary Certificate of the British Canoe Union.

PAINTS DIVISION

B.B.C. meets "Typical Slough Type"

Because he is regarded as being a typical Slough type, Mr. Thomas McDermott, a chargehand in Slough Stores Department, found himself entertaining two B.B.C. producers last month. With a mobile recording unit they had come to Slough to make recordings for a feature broadcast, "A Town Takes Root," in which the story of Slough was told to the nation by the men and women who settled in this rural market town between the wars and transformed it into the largest centre of light industry in the south.



Mr. Thomas McDermott

The story he had to tell was of the Durham miner who, after seventeen years in the pits from the age of 14½, was taking home 30s. a week on which to keep his wife and two children.

"I decided to try to get out of the pits somehow," said Mr. McDermott, "but in fact it was illness which opened the doors to a new life. I came to Slough for my convalescence, and what I saw convinced me that here, if anywhere, lay the opportunity of a better life for my children."

A good friend advised him to go and see the foreman of the Paint Shop "at Nobels in Wexham Road." He was given a start there in September 1934 and has been with I.C.I. ever since. His son Derek is employed in the Slough Paint Shop, and before her marriage his daughter worked in the Slough warehouse.

Veteran of Forty-seven Fights

Mr. Angus MacDonald, of Division Accounts Department, has eight cups, three shields, two presentation watches and



Angus MacDonald, former schoolboy international

any number of medals and certificates at his home. They are the fruits of forty-seven boxing contests, of which he has won no fewer than thirty-five—and he has never been knocked out.

This would be creditable in a veteran, but Mr. MacDonald has only just passed his eighteenth birthday. He celebrated his seventeenth birthday by applying for membership of the famous Slough Centre Boxing Club, home of such champions as Peter Brander, "Ginger" John, Len Harman and Selwyn Langford. His letter of application stated that he had already had forty-three fights, and, looking at his stated age again, the committee thought there must be a typing error somewhere. But when he called in person the mystery was cleared up: the resident trainer recognised in Angus MacDonald the former schoolboy international boxer who represented England in the Festival of Britain contest against Wales. Since then Mr. MacDonald has carried the Slough colours to victory in four successive fights.

PLASTICS DIVISION

What a Bore!

The largest-bore plastic drainage pipe ever laid in Britain went into a trench at the Nylon Works of Dyestuffs Division recently. Twelve inches in diameter, it was made of 'Alkathene,' the plastic invented by Alkali Division and developed and produced by Plastics Division.



A length of large-bore 'Alkathene' pipe is lifted easily

'Alkathene' drain pipe has many advantages over the conventional earthenware. A 12 ft. length of large diameter can easily be lifted by one man; if he should drop it, instead of breaking it bounces. It is unaffected by most concentrated mineral acids, and alkalis have no effect on it at all. The sections of tube are easily welded together by a process using a jet of heated nitrogen, and because it is light and flexible long lengths can be joined together before it is laid in a trench.

At Nylon Works 400 ft. of this tube have been laid about 6 ft. underground. Part of the pipe was in a 120 ft. length, which was jointed in the workshops, then let down into the trench and "threaded" between the timbers shoring up the trench sides. Another length, of 75 ft., was laid in ten minutes.

Drainage systems of 8 in. 'Alkathene' pipe have already been in use at Metals Division and Billingham Division factories for four years. The life of the pipe is believed to be almost unlimited.

Book Society Recommendation for First Book

To while away the time in a German prison camp Mr. Peter Stainforth started to jot down some impressions of his experiences in North Africa, Sicily, Taranto and Arnhem with the 1st Parachute Brigade. The notes grew to a full-length book, and this has now been published by the Falcon Press under the title *Wings of the Wind*.



Mr. Peter Stainforth

Mr. Stainforth, now a member of the Engineering Department at Welwyn, joined the 1st Parachute Brigade in the summer of 1942 soon after its formation. He served through the greater part of the North African campaign and in July 1943 took part in the parachute land-

ing during the invasion of Sicily and later in the seaborne landings at Taranto. September 1944 found him dropping with the 1st Parachute Brigade over Arnhem, and it was during the heroic battle that followed that he was wounded. He spent two days hiding in cellars before making the safety of the St. Elizabeth Hospital. After some of the bitterest fighting of the war our men were forced back across the Rhine, leaving the wounded behind. The last six months of the war for Mr. Stainforth were spent in Oflag 9AZ at Röttenburg, and it was here that he started to jot down his impressions on which the book is based.

Wings of the Wind is Mr. Stainforth's first literary attempt; it has a Book Society recommendation.

THE REGIONS

Commissionaire leads Parade

The Regimental Sergeant-Major at the head of the detachment of Home Guard in the Lord Mayor of London's Show must have seemed familiar to more than one I.C.I. onlooker. Where had they seen that burly figure and military moustache



(Photo: Hackney Gazette)

R.S.M. Tyler leads a Home Guard detachment to the Lord Mayor's Parade

before? Was it at the Southern Region Sales Office? Or could it have been at the British Industries Fair?

Both guesses would have been right. R.S.M. Tyler of the 1st Battalion of the City of London Home Guard is better known during working hours as Head Commissionaire John Tyler of Gloucester House, and for the last six years he has been commissionaire in charge of the Company's B.I.F. stand. Mr. Tyler is no amateur sergeant-major; he ended his army career before joining I.C.I., in 1946, as R.S.M. of his unit, the King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster). He joined the army as a boy of 15, and spent fourteen of his twenty-five years' service in India. During the European operations of the last war he was attached to the 1st Canadian Army at SHAEF.

Mr. Tyler used to be a keen rugby player. He played regularly for the Aldershot Services team and in 1935 was a front-row forward in the Hampshire XV that won the county championship.

I.C.I. (INDIA)

Presentation of Long Service Awards

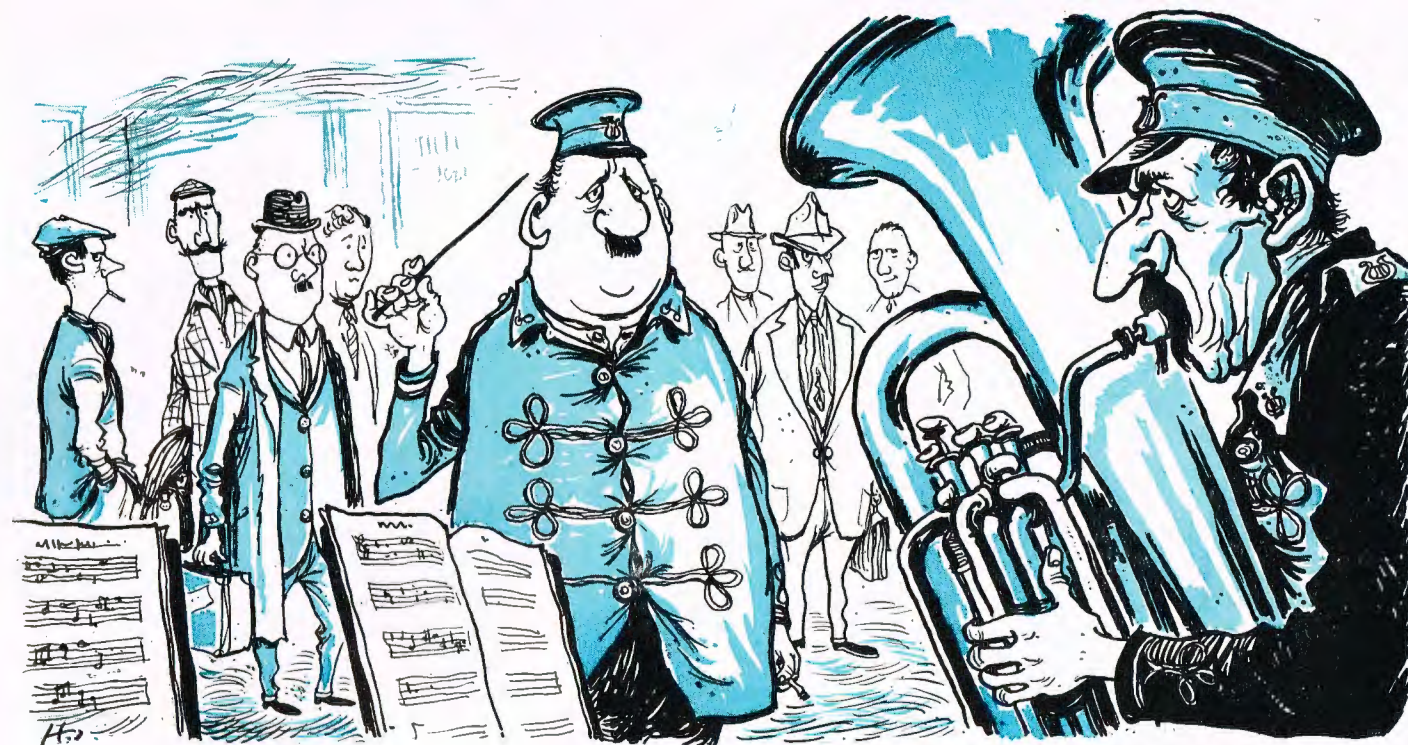
The picture below was taken after fifteen members of the Head Office and Calcutta Divisional Office had received Long Service Awards from Mr. N. D. Harris, chairman of I.C.I. (India). Of the fifteen recipients, eight had completed 25 years' service and the remainder 15 years.



OUR NEXT ISSUE

In the February number we are bringing colour up to the front of the *Magazine* with some photographs on the work being done at the Agricultural Research Station at Jealott's Hill, which celebrates its silver jubilee this year. The article has been written by Kevin FitzGerald, who remembers Jealott's Hill from the days when he was first employed there at a salary of £150 a year.

We are also carrying colour illustrations to another article—one by "Ivy" Irvine on the design and planting of a herb garden. Herbs are so easy to grow and can provide such delicious flavouring that they are worth a place in every garden. If you have no garden, then they can be grown in a window box. Next come some fashion photographs of new clothes and materials made from 'Terylene,' and finally Mr. P. S. de W. Rawson from Pakistan contributes a short story which is in the nature of a satire on bureaucracy.



IT'S AN ILL WIND

By K. B. Bartlett (Plastics Division)

IN 1946, after a military career distinguished only for its length, I exchanged my beret for a bowler, passed my Sam Browne on to Great-aunt Francis, who is a Girl Guide Commissioner for Golders Green, and gave my greatcoat to a taxi driver in part payment for a journey from Euston. I had my slacks dyed and wore them for those pleasant English weekend pastimes like mowing the lawn and whitewashing the kitchen ceiling that I had dreamed about during so many agonising afternoons at the Gezira Club in Cairo and on the Lido at Venice.

"That," I said, "is that. I have finished with the Army. They can fight the next war without me."

It was not so much being recalled as a Z reservist that I minded. That could happen to almost anyone. It was the day they chose—Easter Sunday. It seemed such an odd reversal of form. For several years I fought a losing battle on the matter of compulsory church parades, and only knuckled under when they pointed out that those who did not go on church parade on Sunday morning were just the people who should go on guard on Saturday night—every Saturday night. And now here was that same Army which spent endless time and energy ordering people to church when they did not want to go preventing them from going when they did.

There was a military band playing at Paddington when we arrived to join the train—the North Kensington Gas Works Sunday Band (Veterans Section), I think it was. It was not a very good band. Its members were very old and had to play everything in slow time. They had hardly enough wind to

coax even a spark out of "Blaze Away." But even if they were not a military body, at least they were in uniform. The reservists in draped suits and spear-pointed collars, hairy tweed jackets and corduroys, or caps and chokers were neither military nor uniform. And, anyway, it seemed a nice gesture on the part of the War Office to provide a band—however unmusical—to cheer us on our way. Perhaps, we thought, the Army has changed. Perhaps there really will be sheets and pillows and bedside lamps and cups of tea in bed.

Our disillusioning soon began. The band, it turned out, was not provided by a considerate War Office to brighten our morale, but by a calculating appeals secretary to lighten our pockets.

At Movements Branch someone had blundered—or had underestimated the keenness of the Z reserve. Of the 400 wishing to travel in the special train there were seats for only 300. Chaos resulted. Those who were in the train decided they wanted to get out and be left behind: those who were out decided they were not going to be left behind at any price. Ins and outs struggled with suitcases and each other till Paddington began to look like Waterloo. It was the leader of the North Kensington Gas Works Sunday Band who restored order by passing along the platform shaking his collection box. In a matter of seconds every man jack was in the train, every face hidden behind a newspaper.

Bulging at the sides and no more than ten minutes late, the train began its long journey north-west. In the gardens of suburban London busy husbands planted and weeded and sweated in the warm sun under the watchful eyes of wives

swinging idly in gay hammocks. The train passed through fields bright with the first signs of spring, through the Black Country, which sparkled like jet as the sun smiled down on it, through the hills of Shropshire where holiday-makers sunbathed, and on into the torrential rain of North Wales.

After two days in sodden battledress civilian life seemed remote. The years of uneasy peace since 1945 dissolved like a vague, half-pleasant dream. A tent seemed the natural habitat, 5.30 a.m. the natural hour to rise. Half-forgotten adjectives, long unused except on the golf course, rushed back into the vocabulary. Conversation became normal. Only one thing was lacking. There was no feeling of being part of a military formation, no sense of being other than actors taking part in an old tragi-comedy, revived for a limited run.

But this was to change. It is my firm belief that some clever fellow in the War Office deliberately sited the camp in the knowledge that nowhere is life more rugged and more real than on the coast of Merionethshire, and nowhere is a group of Englishmen more likely to develop a sense of unity than in the climate of North Wales.

One evening, quite suddenly, a gale sprang up. Flagpoles swayed, cracked and tumbled, belongings were scattered, and fine sand was whipped up from the dunes, stinging eyes and ears and hands. It was bitterly cold.

In the N.A.A.F.I. tent, unusually apprehensive waitresses were handing plates of eggs and chips to the few men who, hunger overcoming thirst, had not gone down to the local pub. They kept one eye on the swaying, dancing pressure lamps suspended from the ridge pole.

In the officers' dining tent the maître d'hôtel, incongruous in boiled shirt and tails, bowed captains and colonels to their hurricane-lamp-lit trestle tables with all the charm and aplomb that had made him so popular with curates and chorus boys at some Queen's Hotel. He would doubtless still have bowed had the tent collapsed around him. White-coated orderlies served food which, having been carried twenty yards from the cookhouse, was not only cold and unpalatable (which was usual) but also covered with dust and sand and inedible.

In the stores tent the quartermaster-sergeant, his papers weighted down with clips of ammunition, looked hurriedly through his list of deficiencies to see what stores could be included in his storm damage report and so liquidated.

But the gale did not abate. It intensified. Tents took to the air like gigantic wild sea birds. N.C.O.s organised parties to bang in the pegs and adjust the guy ropes of those tents that remained standing. As there was only one mallet for every seven men, each mallet wielder had several assistants to advise him how to hit the peg on the head and to swear for him when he missed. The guy ropes got plenty of attention: but as the number who thought that guy ropes should be tightened in a storm was roughly equal to the number who thought they should be loosened, much energy was expended to very little net effect—except that several guy ropes were frayed by the furious pushing up and down of slides and so were snapped by the wind when, left alone, they might have held.

One large marquee was receiving no attention—the officers' dining tent. Its occupants had retired to the bar in one of the few huts in the camp, leaving the tent to its fate and the

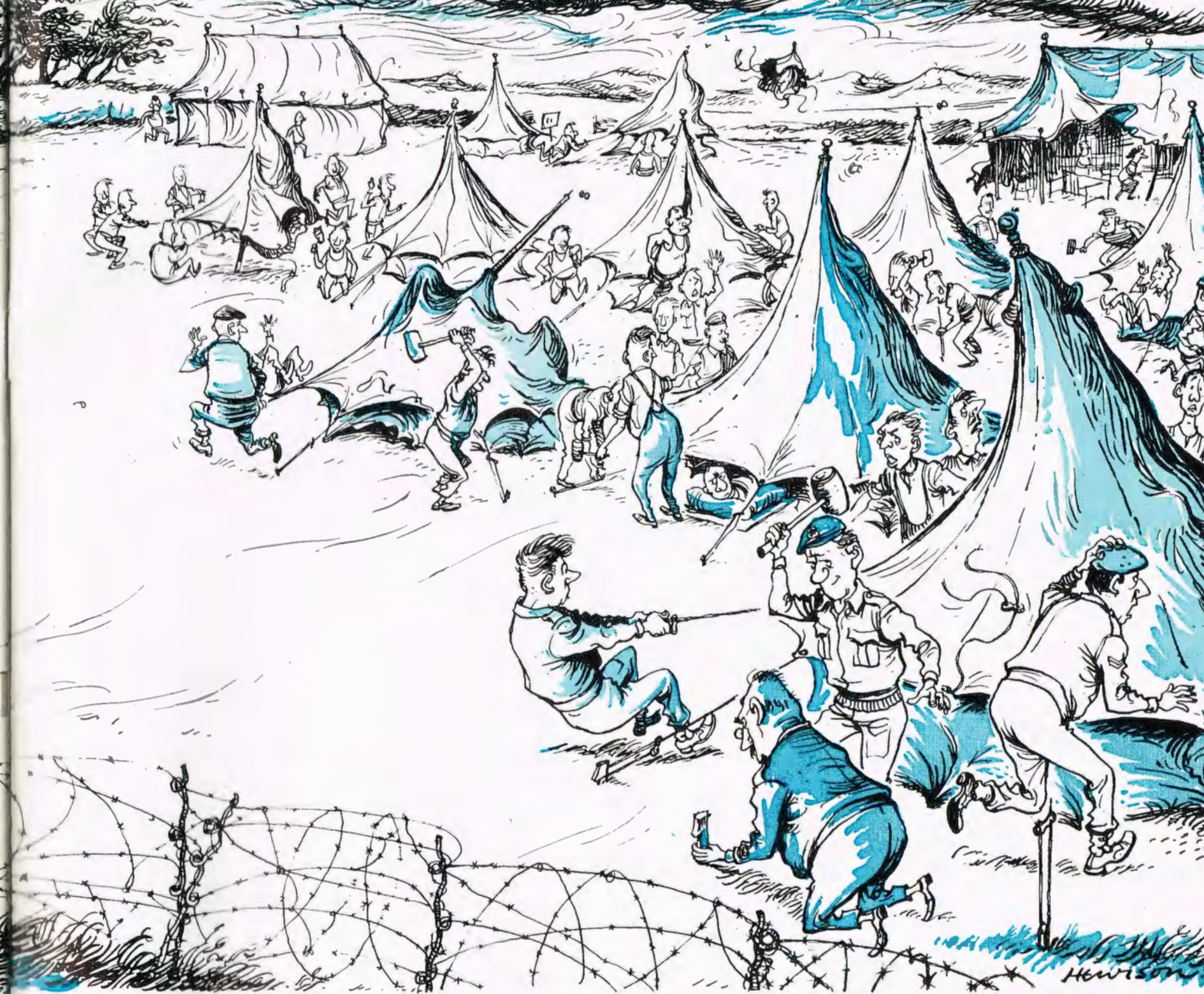


But the gale did not abate. N.C.O.s organised parties to bang in the pegs and adjust the guy ropes of those tents that remained standing . . . it was thus that the N.A.A.F.I. tent was deserted . . .

civilian caterers. But the sergeant-major, an old soldier, knew just where to look for an extra fatigue party, and rounding up the few men who had till now remained unconcerned and undetected in the N.A.A.F.I., he set them to work.

It was thus that the N.A.A.F.I. tent was deserted and abandoned till all its walls were flattened and only the main guy ropes remained securing the roof. The manager appealed to the orderly officer, who spoke to the adjutant, who approached the colonel, who said that as there were no men available the junior officers had better go and see what they could do about it themselves. And so, led by the second-in-command, captains and subalterns sallied forth to brave the night and save the N.A.A.F.I.

At about 2 a.m. the gale lessened a little. The medical officer, who had sat in the bar all night, finished his tenth whisky and looked up from the treatise on flatulence he had been reading. "A wild and windy night," he observed. "I



think we all deserve a rum ration. Have mine sent along here, will you Q?" The M.O. had done his duty.

Forty minutes later, when most of the reservists, exhausted, had fallen asleep wherever they could find shelter, the lieutenant quartermaster made the rum issue available. The Q.M. had done his duty.

Four gunners returning from some nocturnal adventure were mistaken for a working party. They had expected to spend the night in the guard room and were rather surprised to be welcomed back with rum. They managed to get fifteen tots between them, and while they did not quite understand why, they concluded that the Army had changed in some minor particulars since last they were in it, which was a good thing. Theirs was one of the tents which had been blown down, but they did not notice it. They just crawled in under the canvas and snored. They were not on parade the following morning.

The reservists who did parade, however, were no longer a collection of civilians in battledress but a regiment of soldiers. They marched rather than slouched and, despite the wild night, were better turned out than on any previous parade. Antagonism had given place to mutual respect. The men had saved the officers' mess. The officers had saved the N.A.A.F.I. The Q.M. had saved a quart of rum. The M.O. had saved the cost of his nightcap. There was a feeling of comradeship and general good will all round.

Thus was a Regimental Spirit born. After two weeks' training a moderately efficient fighting unit was in being. It then dispersed. Soldiers returned the boots and battledress that had been theirs on loan and resumed their identities as band leaders, barrow boys, bus conductors and bank clerks. Two days later their fortnight as Z reservists was forgotten.

If it ever becomes necessary to re-form that moderately efficient fighting unit our only hope is to pray for gales.



"Parisian Enterprise"

Photo by F. J. Doherty (Birmingham Area Office)